

REMARKS

Initially, Applicant would like to express appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided. Upon entry of the present amendment, the claims 1, 4, 5, 21, 23 and 31-32 will have been amended and claims 3, 20, 22, 24-26 and 29 will have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1-2, 4-5, 21, 23, 27-28 and 30-32 are pending in the present application for consideration by the Examiner. Applicant notes that claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of dependent claims 3, 20 and 24; claim 21 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of dependent claims 22 and 25; and claim 23 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of dependent claims 26 and 29.

The Examiner has rejected claims 30-32 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. While Applicant submits that one skilled in the relevant would understand the approximation with respect to the thickness of the resin-molded surface, Applicant has elected to remove “approximately” from these claims, solely to expedite the patent application process in a manner consistent with the PTO's patent business goals, 65 Fed. Reg. 54603 (September 8, 2000). It is thus respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-5, 20-23 and 27-29, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,141,678 to BLUM and has rejected claims 1, 21, 24, 25 and 30-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,315,929 to

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection. As noted in the above summary of the discussion with the Examiner, Applicant submits that the applied references fail to teach or disclose at least the claimed surface shape of the resin-molded surface layer being uninterrupted, as claimed in independent claim 1; the surface layer surface configuration being uninterrupted, as claimed in independent claim 21, or the aspherical surface of the resin-molded surface layer being uninterrupted, as claimed in claim 23. For example, the surface shape of the molded layer 12 of BLUM, as well as the surface shape of the molded layer of ISHIHARA, is interrupted, as shown, *inter alia*, in Figs 1 and 2 of BLUM and Figs. 2-4 of ISHIHARA. It is thus submitted that the present claimed invention is patentably distinct from BLUM, ISHIHARA and the other references of record.

With respect to rejected dependent claims 2-5, 20, 22, 24-25 and 27-32, since claims 2, 4-5, 27-28 and 30-32 are dependent from one of claims 1, 21 or 23, which are allowable for at least the reasons discussed *supra*, these pending dependent claims are also allowable for at least these reasons. Further, all dependent claims recite additional features which further define the present invention over the references of record. Also as discussed *supra*, rejected claims 3, 20, 22, 24-25 and 29 have been canceled, their limitations having been incorporated into an independent claim.

Absent a disclosure in a single reference of each and every element cited in a claim, a *prima facie* case of anticipation cannot be made under 35 U.S.C. § 102. Since the applied references fail to disclose each and every element recited in independent claims 1, 21 and 23, these claims, and the claims dependent therefrom, are not anticipated thereby.

The Examiner has additionally rejected claims 23, 26 and 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over ISHIHARA in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,759,457 to INOUE et al. However, as discussed above, ISHIHARA fails to disclose at least the aspherical surface of the resin-molded surface layer being uninterrupted, as claimed in claim 23. Applicant further submits that INOUE fails to disclose at least this feature as well. Further, since claim 26 has been canceled and 32 is dependent from independent claim 23, independent claim 23 being allowable for at least the reasons discussed *supra*, dependent claim 32 is also allowable. Further, all dependent claims each sets forth a further combination of elements neither taught nor disclosed by the applied references.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that each and every pending claim of the present application meets the requirements for patentability under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102, 103 and 112, and respectfully request the Examiner to indicate the allowance of each and every pending claim in the present application.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the present amendment is in proper form and that none of the references either taken together or taken alone in any proper combination thereof, anticipate or render obvious Applicant's invention. In addition, the applied references of record have been discussed and distinguished, while significant features of the present invention have been pointed out. Accordingly, consideration of the present amendment, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all of the claims therein are respectfully requested and are now believed to be appropriate.

Applicant notes that this amendment is being made to advance prosecution of the application to allowance, and with respect to the claimed features argued as deficient in the prior art, should not be considered as surrendering equivalents of the territory between the claims prior to the present amendment and the amended claims. Further, no acquiescence as to the propriety of the Examiner's rejection is made by the present amendment. All other amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

P19101.A09

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding the present response, or this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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